

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 17, 19, 20, and 24-26 are presented for further examination. Claims 17, 19 and 26 have been allowed. Claims 1, 24, and 25 have been amended.

In the final Office Action mailed December 31, 2003, the Examiner finally rejected claims 1-8, 20, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Hutter et al. (of record). Claims 17, 19, and 26 were allowed. In a telephone conference with the Examiner on January 22, 2004, applicant's undersigned representative argued that Hutter et al. do not teach a "completely conductive" filling material. The Examiner responded that the claims do not require "completely conductive" filling material, and if they were so amended, an RCE would have to be filed because this limitation would be considered new matter.

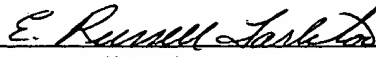
Applicant has amended the rejected independent claims 1, 24, and 25 to recite that the filling material is "completely" conductive. Inasmuch as Hutter et al. do not teach such a filling material, applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in this application are now in condition for allowance.

In the event the Examiner finds informalities that can be resolved by telephone conference, the Examiner is urged to contact applicant's undersigned representative by telephone at (206) 622-4900 in order to expeditiously resolve prosecution of this application. Consequently, early and favorable action allowing these claims and passing this case to issuance is respectfully solicited.

Application No. 09/853,833
Reply to Office Action dated December 31, 2003

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

Respectfully submitted,
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